

THE 2006 HIGHLIGHTS

BC College and Institute Student Outcomes

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes (CISO) Survey is an annual province-wide survey conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and from BC's public colleges, university colleges, institutes, and a special purpose university. For the 2006 survey, 16,248 former students were interviewed by telephone, 9–20 months after they left their post-secondary programs. They were asked to evaluate their educational experience and to talk about their employment outcomes, further education, and personal development. Highlights from that survey are presented here.

BACCALAUREATE GRADUATES NOT SURVEYED IN 2006

This year, for the first time, former students who took baccalaureate programs at BC's public colleges, university colleges, and institutes were not included in the CISO survey. Instead, these former students are now part of the Baccalaureate Graduate Survey (BGS) conducted by The University Presidents' Council of BC; for more information, go to <http://www.tupc.bc.ca/>. Because of this change, the number of students available for surveying by CISO has decreased by about 10 percent.

IN THE HIGHLIGHTS

- 95% of the former students surveyed were very satisfied or satisfied with their education
- 84% said the quality of instruction was good or very good
- 44% reported taking further studies since leaving
- 85% of respondents were employed or looking for work
- 75% of those employed full-time were in jobs that were related to their training
- 46% of those surveyed borrowed funds to pay for their education.

HOW DO FORMER STUDENTS EVALUATE THEIR EDUCATION?

Former students were asked to rate how well their programs helped them to develop certain skills, such as using computers or writing clearly and concisely. The highest ratings were given to skill development in analyzing and thinking critically—using computers was rated the lowest.

Respondents said their programs helped them develop skills

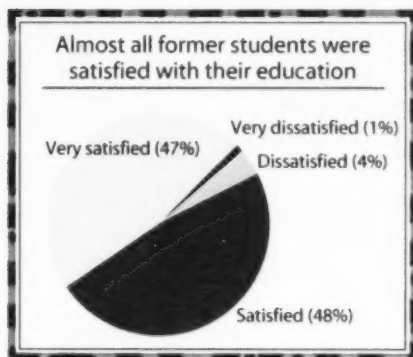
Very well or well

Analyze and think critically	84%
Work effectively with others	84%
Read and comprehend material	83%
Learn on your own	82%
Resolve issues or problems	76%
Write clearly and concisely	75%
Speak effectively	74%
Use computers	71%

In addition to rating skills development, former students were given an opportunity to rate the quality of instruction provided in their programs. Most former students gave a positive rating, with almost equal percentages of respondents rating the quality of instruction "very good" (44 percent) and "good" (41 percent).

ARE FORMER STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THEIR EDUCATION? DID THEY MEET THEIR GOALS?

Almost all former students said they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the education they received. In 2006, the CISO survey used a new rating scale—“very satisfied,” “satisfied,” “dissatisfied,” and “very dissatisfied”—to ask this question.



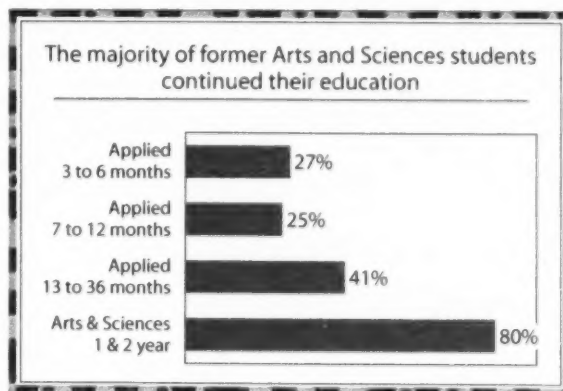
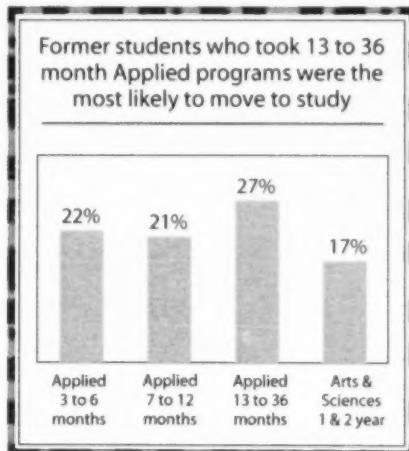
A large majority of former students (88 percent) said they had “completely met” or “mostly met” their main reason for enrolling—this percentage is up slightly from 2005 and 2004 (86 and 85 percent, respectively).

WHY DID FORMER STUDENTS CHOOSE THE INSTITUTION THEY ATTENDED? HOW MANY RELOCATED TO STUDY?

In 2006, half of all the CISO survey respondents were asked why they selected their particular institution. The most common reason given—by almost

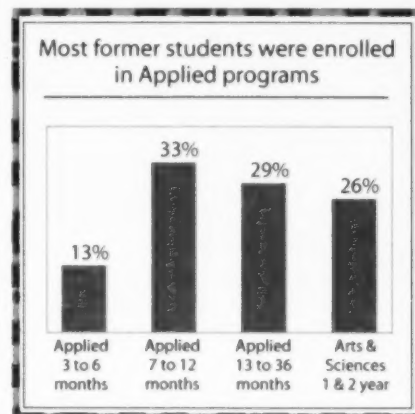
a third of respondents—was because it was in the region where they lived. Former students from outside the Lower Mainland were more likely than those in the Lower Mainland to say they chose their institution because it was close to home (49 versus 21 percent). Twenty percent of respondents chose their institution for its reputation.

Most former students remained in their home community to study; only 22 percent said they relocated to attend their chosen institution. Respondents from longer Applied programs were the most likely to relocate.



WHAT PROGRAMS DID FORMER STUDENTS TAKE?

Three-quarters of former students surveyed were enrolled in Applied programs—programs designed to lead to employment in a specific field. The remaining students were in two-year Arts and Sciences programs, which usually lead to further studies.



HOW MANY CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION?

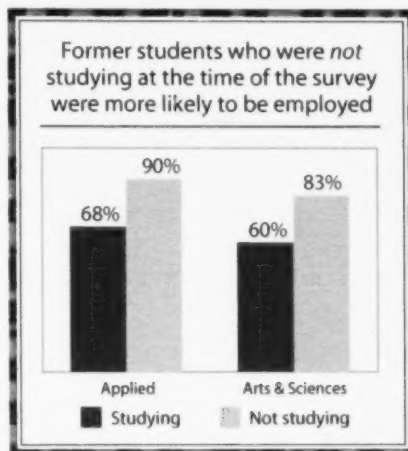
Just under half of the former students surveyed (44 percent) reported taking further education since leaving their college and institute programs—this percentage is slightly lower than in 2005, when 47 percent of respondents reported taking further studies. Respondents from Arts and Sciences programs were the most likely to have taken further studies.

HOW MANY FORMER STUDENTS ARE EMPLOYED? WHAT DO THEY EARN?

When surveyed, 85 percent of respondents were employed or looking for work. The majority of those who were not looking for work were studying. Of those not studying, 89 percent were employed. Former students from Applied programs were more likely than those from Arts and Sciences to be working.

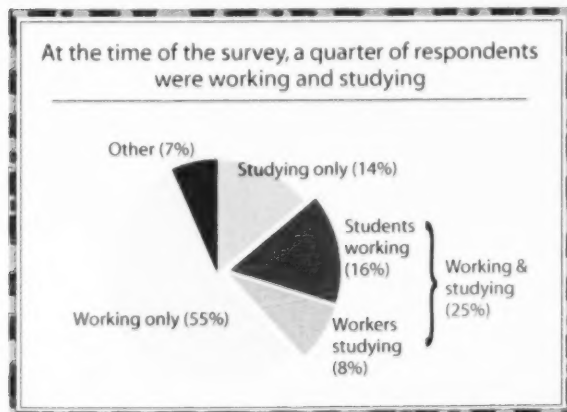
Most employed respondents said they were paid workers employed by someone else—only five percent were self-employed in 2006, compared with six percent in 2005 and seven per-

cent in 2004. Over three-quarters (77 percent) of those who were employed worked full-time. Half of all employed respondents, including part-time workers, earned over \$16 per hour.



HOW MANY EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION?

At the time of the survey, almost a third of employed respondents reported they were studying—two-thirds of employed former Arts and Sciences students were studying again.

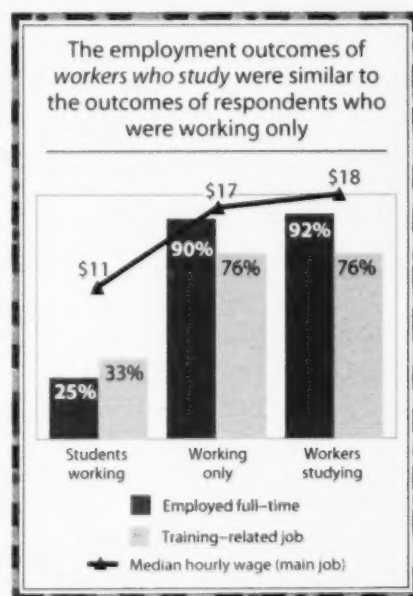
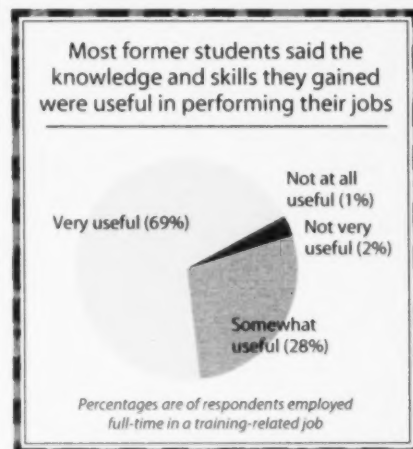


The former students who were both working and studying at the time of the survey were asked if they considered themselves to be primarily students or workers. The majority said they thought of themselves as students.

Those who were primarily students (students who work) were not as likely to be employed full-time or have training-related jobs. Those who thought of themselves as workers (workers who study) had employment outcomes that were as good as or better than respondents who worked only.

ARE FORMER STUDENTS IN TRAINING-RELATED JOBS?

Of those employed full-time, three-quarters were in a job that was related to their training. The majority of these former students said that the knowledge and skills gained in their program were "very useful" in performing their jobs.



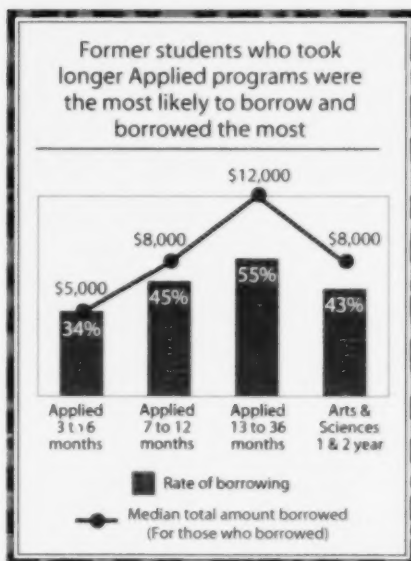
HOW DID FORMER STUDENTS PAY FOR THEIR EDUCATION?

Half of all CISO survey respondents were asked a series of questions related to student finances. One of the first questions was a request to identify the top three sources of funding that they used to pay for their education. Financial support from family, spouse, or friends was the top source, followed by income from employment while studying and personal savings.

The 2006 survey was the first time that students were asked if they received free or subsidized room and board from family, friends, or other sources—41 percent of respondents said “yes.” More males than females reported receiving room and board (46 versus 37 percent).

HOW MANY BORROWED FUNDS?

Almost half (46 percent) of respondents borrowed to pay for their education—either government student loans or money from other sources, such as personal bank loans, credit cards, or borrowing from family. The median total amount borrowed was \$9,000. Former students from long Applied programs (13 to 36 months) were the most likely to borrow and also had the highest median debt loads.



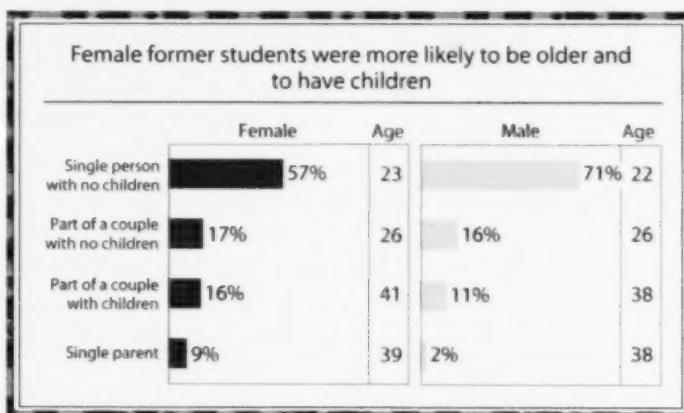
WHO WERE THE FORMER STUDENTS SURVEYED?

At the time of the survey, the median age for respondents was 24—this is a decrease from previous CISO survey findings and can be attributed to the exclusion of former baccalaureate students, who tend to be older.

Female respondents were slightly older than male respondents. As in previous years, more females (53 percent) were surveyed than males.

In 2006, almost two-thirds of respondents were single with no children;

20 percent had children. Of the small group of former students who were single parents, most (84 percent) were female.



MORE ABOUT THE SURVEY

The results of the BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey are used by the institutions to improve programs and services. The Ministry of Advanced Education uses the information for post-secondary policy development and accountability. Students, parents, and the general public can view students' outcomes through BC Student Outcomes Reports (<http://outcomes.bestats.gov.bc.ca/SORS/index.asp>) or Education Planner (<http://www.educationplanner.bc.ca/>), to help them make informed post-secondary education choices.

For more information on BC student outcomes, please see <http://outcomes.bestats.gov.bc.ca/> or visit the institutional research department of your college, university college, or institute.



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